



**Vol. 55 No. 12 | December 2020**



## **A Note From Our Agency Director**

It has been a year full of uncertainties, challenges, and changes, but it has also been a year of hope. As we close out the year that will be recorded as "unprecedented" and momentous in history, let us focus on the important work of libraries in the coming year.

Libraries are essential to a healthy community. As the Country and individual communities continue to open up and adjust business practices, it is imperative that libraries be a part of those discussions. After all, we know that our patrons rely on us and will continue to utilize the library services at every turn, especially in a time of crisis. I have spoken with numerous library directors who have voiced concerns regarding what the "numbers" will look like when counting various statistics for reporting this year. I understand that concern, but it is only part of the picture.

As we reflect on the work over the past year, I encourage you to review what you have accomplished in earnest. You have met a pandemic head-on and continued to provide much-needed services to your library patrons, even if you have provided those services in a different manner. Take a few moments and note the changes you made and the impact they had on patrons. The following are some examples to get you started:

- Several of our public libraries created online programming for Summer Reading. The participation numbers were staggering. Over 175,000 people attended a virtual program this year, 5,174 programs were held, 1.98 million items were circulated, and almost 34,000 activity bags were distributed!
- Online book clubs were held across the state.
- Resources were added to collections to meet the needs of patrons. At the SC State Library, we added Tutor.com and TumbleMath, which have been extremely successful.
- Reference questions, tax assistance, training and conferences, and individual-tailored assistance were moved to some form of virtual engagement.

There are many, many more stories. Craft your story so that others understand the value of your library. The story may have shifted or changed, but the value of the library did not. That is the essence of a library really, shifting and changing to meet the needs of the people in our communities.

I encourage each of you to bolster someone else up; these are challenging times, and libraries have risen to the occasion to meet their communities' needs. Libraries are physical buildings, but the heart of a library is in its staff. Acknowledge and encourage those around you. Talk with your peers, coworkers, or teams and acknowledge their contribution over the last ten months. Celebrate your successes.

The next part of the journey that we have ahead of us will not be easy, but it is possible. I cannot think of a better group of people to work alongside to address the work ahead on serious issues such as broadband, equity, and unemployment. I have every faith we will be successful in our endeavors.

Stay well, friends.



Warm Regards,

Leesa M. Aiken  
SCSL Agency Director

## Training Schedule

Although our building is currently closed to the public, our mission is to offer a wide variety of virtual training and programs.

- [Networking Skills for Library Staff \(December 8\)](#) - Join SCSL Communications Director Dr. Curtis Rogers for an informative session on networking skills for library staff members. Learn how to network in various situations and a blend of skills for different personality types.
- [Readers Advisory in a Post COVID World \(December 9\)](#) - Join International Readers Advisory expert Becky Spratford as she walks you through her 10 Rules of Basic RA Service. She updated the rules with lessons learned from our COVID experience and will explain how every member of your staff can get involved to help provide this vital service to readers.
- ["Unforgettable" talk with Cecil Williams \(December 10\)](#) - Join us for a virtual book talk with acclaimed photographer Cecil J. Williams. He is well known for documenting the Civil Rights Movement in South Carolina. Mr. Williams will discuss his book *Unforgettable: 1950-1970: celebrating a time of life hope and bravery* that is the inspiration for the "Unforgettable" traveling exhibit currently on display at the [Sumter County Museum](#).



## Getting You Prepared

From March 2021 to June 2021, The [Northeast Document Conservation](#)

[Center](#) (NEDCC) provides free emergency preparedness training for South Carolina cultural heritage organizations sponsored by the South Carolina State Library and funded by the [Institute of Museum and Library Services](#). This course is open to individuals associated with South Carolina cultural heritage organizations, county government departments, and offices involved with emergency management and public safety. There is no cost to attend, but [you must register to reserve a seat](#). Seats are limited to 33 registrants per region.

## The Tools You Need

The [United for Libraries](#) statewide subscription is now active and available to all South Carolina library trustees, friends groups, staff members, and library-related foundations. To access these excellent learning resources, you will need to create an individual account, which only takes a few minutes.

Users can find step-by-step instructions in a downloadable format at our [Library Trustees: Education & Training page](#). For questions about these fantastic online resources or to set up a virtual training session for your library board, please contact [General Library Consultant Donna Lolos](#).

## United for Libraries



Association of Library Trustees,  
Advocates, Friends and Foundations  
*A division of the American Library Association*

## State Employees



### Finish the Year Strong

End what has been a tough year on a high note. Submit your agency's best publication for a [2020 Notable State Document Award](#).

The program recognizes outstanding state publications produced during the calendar year. Categories include physical or digital monographs (individual publications), serials, and websites. [Enter online](#) or email your entry to

[statedocuments@statelibrary.sc.gov](mailto:statedocuments@statelibrary.sc.gov) by December 31. For more information, contact [Sheila Dorsey](#), Government Documents Librarian.

## SC Residents

### Go Old School

Today's young people have a multitude of ways to communicate. They can call, text, instant message, email, you name it.





However, very few utilize the art of writing a good letter. Here is your chance to teach students in grades 4-12 about the power of the written word. Please encourage them to enter the [Letters About Literature](#) contest sponsored by the [South Carolina](#)

[State Library Foundation](#). To enter, write a personal letter to an author, living or dead, from any genre, explaining how that author's work changed their way of thinking about the world or themselves. We won't completely abandon technology. You may submit entries [via the ReadSC website](#). Don't delay; the contest closes on January 8, 2021.

### Send Us Your Entries

The Young Minds Dreaming student poetry contest is open. We invite all South Carolina students in grades 3rd through 12th to write a poem about what inspires them. Author Pat Mora is this year's featured guest. She will join us for a ceremony in late spring 2021 to celebrate the 2020 and 2021 contest winners. Pat Mora's books remind us that inspiration is around us if we listen and notice: Mothers, Grandmothers, Families, the Earth, and our experiences. She charges young people to think about what (or who) has been a significant experience or influence when drafting their poem. [Visit our contest page](#) for additional information.



### One Call Away

How many times have you thought, "I just need ten minutes?" Whether it is while shopping, working, or riding in the car, we sometimes need an educational way to entertain children. Have them call

Katie, our reading ambassador, and therapy dog. Katie's [Telephone Tales storyline](#) features narrated versions of children's stories. The recordings change regularly, and we even have a few holiday classics in the mix. Call (803) 734-1110 and get the break that you need.



Did you know the South Carolina State Library's collection has a great [selection of cookbooks](#)? State Library [cardholders](#) can schedule [a curbside pickup](#) to check out some of these great titles. From a South Carolina barbecue history to the food of the Lowcountry, we've got you covered. Visit our [online cookbook page](#) to learn more!

## Want more information about SC and its libraries?

It can be in your inbox every month.



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For more information on the South Carolina State Library, and a list of our board members, please visit the [About Us](#) section on our website. Visit our Digital Collections to [view previous issues of More](#). ISSN 1554-5768